



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS' ASSESSMENT TESTING PROGRAM 2010–2011

## Information Handbook



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## 1 ISA CONTACTS

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## 2 ISA SCHEDULES

In 2010–2011 there are two administrations of the ISA: the first in October 2010 and the second in February 2011. Separate schedules are provided below.

### 2.1 Key Dates for the October 2010 Administration

June 30	Registrations for October Administration close
From late July	Schools contacted to confirm their participation and registration details online
August 25	Last day to confirm participation and registration details online or to withdraw
September 20	Last day for test materials to arrive in schools
<b>September 27– October 8</b>	<b>Full test administered in schools (with option of October 11–15 if a vacation occurs between September 27 and October 8).</b>
October 15	All test materials returned to arrive back at ACER by this date (or October 22 for schools testing during Oct 11–15)
From late October	Student <i>bio-data</i> provided to schools for verification of student test participants and input of additional information as required (see section 9)
November 22	Last day for the return of student <i>bio-data</i> information from all schools
Early December	Schools emailed requesting ‘secure’ email address for delivery of instructions concerning online results access
Mid December	Schools receive email outlining procedure for delivery of results online
By/on December 23	Release of ISA results online
January 2011	Invoices emailed to schools

### 2.2 Key Dates for the February 2011 Administration

October 31	Registrations for February Administration close
From November 12	Schools contacted to confirm their participation and registration details online
December 13	Last day to confirm participation and registration details online or to withdraw
January 24, 2011	Last day for test materials to arrive in schools
<b>January 31– February 11</b>	<b>Full test administered in schools (with option of February 14–18 if a vacation occurs between January 31 and February 11)</b>
February 18	All test materials returned and back at ACER by this date (or February 25 for schools testing during Feb 14–18)
From early March	Student <i>bio-data</i> provided to schools for verification of student test participants and input of additional information as required (see section 9)
March 23	Last day for the return of student <i>bio-data</i> information from all schools

Early April	Schools emailed requesting 'secure' email address for delivery of instructions concerning online results access
Early-mid April	Schools receive email outlining procedure for delivery of results online
By mid April	Release of ISA results online
Late April	Invoices emailed to schools

### 3 PRE-ASSESSMENT INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO ACER

#### 3.1 Confirmation of Registration

Schools will be contacted to confirm their participation and registration details such as participant numbers and courier address using the *ISA Online Registration System*. Online confirmations must be received by:

- August 25 for the October Administration
- December 13 for the February Administration

This confirmation process is vital to ensure that the ISA assessment material does not go astray, and that the accurate quantity of test material is sent to each participating school. **Assessment material will not be shipped until schools have confirmed their participation and registration details.**

### 4 PRE-ASSESSMENT INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO PARENTS

#### 4.1 Privacy Provisions

Australian privacy legislation obliges the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to comply with Australian law with regard to communicating information about medical conditions of Australian nationals, and with regard to providing information for the parents of Australian nationals about their rights under the Act.

#### 4.2 Consent to communicate information about a medical condition

If the school believes that an Australian student needs special consideration or accommodations for testing because of a medical condition or intellectual impairment, and wishes to inform ACER of these circumstances, parents of the student must be informed of their right under Australian law to withhold the information. A short note is provided in Appendix 1 of this document, which we ask you to copy to parents of Australian students to whom this may apply.

Parents must notify the school if they do not consent to medical information being recorded about their child. If parents have been informed and do not respond, they are considered to have provided consent.

#### 4.3 Access to personal information

The parents of any Australian student participating in the ISA should be informed of their rights to access personal information about their child. A short note is provided in an Appendix 1 of this document, which we ask you to copy to parents of Australian students.

### 5 DELIVERY OF ISA MATERIAL TO SCHOOLS

Assessment material will be shipped via courier in early September (October Administration) and in early to mid January (February Administration) providing the school has confirmed their registration details (refer to section 3.1).

Schools will receive the following material:

- *School Coordinator's Handbook & Administration Handbooks*
- Student Booklet for each participating student

- *Confidentiality Agreement* forms to be completed by all staff involved in the supervision of the ISA
- *Head's Questionnaire* (if not previously completed by school)
- *Teacher's Feedback* forms
- Shipment Consignment Record
- Shipper's documentation for return courier (waybill and commercial invoice for shipping purposes)

## 6 STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND EXEMPTIONS

ACER recommends that all students be administered the ISA, except those students for whom the experience would be unduly intimidating (for example, students with very little English proficiency). However, there is no obligation to include any student in the ISA program. Where the school considers that participation in the test would be detrimental to a student, ACER recommends against that student's participation. Students exempted entirely from participation need not be registered.

Please note that reporting at the class and school level will be based on those students who participate.

### 6.1 Students with disabilities

In the case of a student with a disability that may affect their performance in the assessment under standard conditions (e.g. vision impairment, ADHD, hand dysfunction, etc.), the school has a number of options.

1. Exempt the student from the testing program.
2. Include the student in the testing program under normal conditions.
3. Include the student in the testing program under standard conditions but exclude their results from the school aggregate. Check the exclusion box on the front cover of the testing booklet to explain why it is appropriate to exclude this student from aggregate school results. For example, a student may be excluded because the level of support the student was given was too extensive for this student's data to be comparable with that of other students. Students who are excluded will receive an individual report and appear on the class report, but their data will not contribute to the class mean scores or the school mean scores. If you have any Australian students within this category, please see *Privacy legislation covering Australian students* (Section 4).
4. Include the student in the testing program and arrange special support for the student. The special support could be in the form of, for example, extended time, a scribe, or administration of the tests in a separate area. The school may suggest a particular type of special support or seek advice from ACER. The responsibility for judging that there is a need for special support rests with the school. ACER will support appropriate special support where practical and where the special support is incidental to the construct intended to be measured. Please describe non-standard conditions in the *Details provided by the teacher (if necessary)* section on the front cover of the student booklets. Students for whom special support is made will be included in aggregated school results unless there is a specific request to the contrary. If you have any Australian students within this category, please see *Privacy legislation covering Australian students* (Section 4).

### 6.2 Students with limited English

In the case of a student with very limited English, the school may choose any of the following.

1. Exempt the student from the testing program.
2. Include the student in the testing program under normal conditions.
3. Administer only one or two of the tests to students with limited English (for example, the Mathematical Literacy assessment only). In such a case, the teacher should mark the student as 'absent' for the other assessment(s). Please note, however, that the school will be invoiced for each student who completes any part of the assessment at the full rate (AUD40.00).
4. Include the student in the testing program under standard conditions but exclude their results from the school aggregate. Check the exclusion box on the front cover of the testing booklet to explain why it is appropriate to exclude this student from aggregate school results. Students who are excluded will receive an individual report and appear on the class report, but their data will not contribute to the class mean scores or the school mean scores.

Information collected about language background will be taken into account in reporting comparative performances of like schools and sub-group performance, but not at the individual student level.

### 6.3 Special circumstances during test administration

There is a section on the front cover of the Student Booklet for teachers to fill in: *Details provided by the teacher (if necessary)*. Teachers should record here special conditions that might affect the responses of the students. More detailed information will be provided in the *Administration Handbooks*.

## 7 ADMINISTRATION OF THE ISA ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Assessment Security

- Assessment material must be stored securely until the days specified for the assessment.
- Student Booklets may not be copied for any purpose.
- Student Booklets are not to be used for practice.
- No Student Booklets are to remain in the school after:
  - October 22 (October Administration)
  - February 25 (February Administration)

### 7.2 Student Booklets

All of the assessments (Mathematical Literacy, Reading, Writing Task A and Writing Task B) are contained in one Student Booklet for each grade level. For convenience the materials for the two testing mornings are printed with different orientations: Mathematical Literacy and Writing Task A one way, and Reading and Writing Task B the other way. A student booklet is provided for each confirmed participant and classroom administrator. A limited number of extra student booklets will be included in the consignment.

The teacher or the student **MUST** complete the section *Details provided by the student* on the front cover of the student booklet **BEFORE** the commencement of the first testing session. It is absolutely essential that each student is uniquely identified by their name, so that teachers will be able to distinguish students when the student *bio-data* information is provided to schools after the assessment and when reports are provided to the school.

### 7.3 Administration Handbooks

The procedures for the administration of the tests are set out in the *Administration Handbooks*, included in each shipment of testing materials. Electronic copies of the ISA 2010–2011 *Administration Handbooks* will be emailed to schools upon request following confirmation of school registration.

**Ensure teachers have time to familiarise themselves with these procedures prior to administering the test.** It is essential that the instructions are followed exactly as specified in the *Handbook*. Each teacher requires an *Administration Handbook* when they are administering the ISA, as there are instructions that must be read aloud to students for each section of the test.

Your school is responsible for making any special arrangements for students requiring special support or assistance. Where this is provided it must be noted in the appropriate section of the *Details provided by the teacher* on the Student Booklet cover pages.

### 7.4 Timing

Schools have the option of administering ISA 2010–2011 in either October 2010 or February 2011. Please note that schools cannot register to sit in both October and February. See Key Dates (2.1 and 2.2) for testing windows in which to administer the ISA.

The assessments should be administered in the morning, while students are fresh. Note that, for reasons of test security, the assessments must be administered at the same time to all students within the school, regardless of Grade level. The approximate times required for each Grade's assessment are listed in the table below. **The actual times will be confirmed in the administration handbooks.**

<b>MORNING ONE</b>	<b>GRADES 3, 4 &amp; 5</b>	<b>GRADES 6 &amp; 7</b>	<b>GRADES 8, 9 &amp; 10</b>
<b>Orientation</b>	<b>5 mins</b>	<b>5 mins</b>	<b>5 mins</b>
<b>Student Details</b>	<b>5 mins</b>	<b>5 mins</b>	<b>5 mins</b>
<b>Mathematical Literacy Part One</b>	<b>45 mins</b>	<b>45 mins</b>	<b>50 mins</b>
Practice questions	15 mins	15 mins	15 mins
Test questions	30 mins	30 mins	35mins
<b>B R E A K</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>
<b>Mathematical Literacy Part Two</b>	<b>30 mins</b>	<b>40 mins</b>	<b>45 mins</b>
Test questions	30 mins	40 mins	45 mins
<b>B R E A K</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>	<b>15–30 mins</b>
<b>Writing Task A</b>	<b>40 mins</b>	<b>40 mins</b>	<b>40 mins</b>
Introduction and discussion	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins
Writing time	30 mins	30 mins	30 mins
<b>TOTAL TIME MORNING ONE</b>	<b>155-185 minutes</b>	<b>165-195 minutes</b>	<b>175-205 minutes</b>

<b>MORNING TWO</b>	<b>ALL GRADES</b>
<b>Orientation</b>	<b>5 mins</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>55 min</b>
Practice questions	10 mins
Test questions	45 mins
<b>B R E A K</b>	<b>15-30 mins</b>
<b>Writing Task B</b>	<b>40 mins</b>
Introduction and discussion	10 mins
Writing time	30 mins
<b>TOTAL TIME MORNING TWO</b>	<b>115-130 minutes</b>

## 8 RETURN OF ASSESSMENT MATERIAL TO ACER

Schools are responsible for the courier costs associated with the return of test materials to ACER. Schools will be provided with shipper's documentation for return of their test materials (courier waybill and commercial invoice for shipping purposes).

All used and unused Student Booklets, along with *Head's Questionnaire* (where provided), *Teacher's* and *School Coordinator's Feedback* forms, and *Confidentiality Agreement* forms should be returned as soon as the assessment is complete.

**ISA is a secure assessment and as such no Student Booklets are to remain in the school. ACER will contact schools regarding any material that has not been returned.**

## **9 VERIFICATION OF STUDENT DETAILS POST ASSESSMENT**

Following receipt of the student booklets at ACER, the student identification details and comments supplied on the cover of the booklets will be collated. *Bio-data* spreadsheets will be provided to all schools for verification of student participant details. Each school will be asked to provide additional student information to enable accurate reporting and for research purposes (including language background, class name and whether each student has participated in ESOL classes this school year).

Schools will start receiving their student *Bio-data* spreadsheet from:

- Late October (October administration)
- Early March (February Administration)

Schools must return their completed student *Bio-data* spreadsheet by:

- November 22 (October Administration)
- March 23 (February Administration)

Please note that delays in the return of the *Student Bio-data* spreadsheet may result in delays in reporting.

## **10 REPORTING OF RESULTS**

### **10.1 Delivery of Results**

ISA 2010–2011 reports will be delivered online to schools on:

- By/on December 23 (October administration)
- By mid April 2011 (February administration)

*ISA Results Online* allows schools to download their ISA student results from the Internet, using a secure means for delivery. Only participating schools are able to access the report information. No school is able to access the reports of any other individual school.

The online reports are provided in a combination of fixed (PDF) and interactive (Microsoft Excel) formats. The Excel format allows further analysis of these data to be carried out at the school level. To view samples of reports provided, visit the ISA website: <http://www.acer.edu.au/isa/reports.html>

### **10.2 Secure Email Address**

ACER will contact schools in mid-December (October administration) or early April (February administration) nominating the email address of the ISA contact person as the ‘secure’ email address for the delivery of instructions and a password for online results access. Schools wishing to use an alternative email address to the one nominated must contact ACER. Only one secure email per school is used by ACER.

## **11 ISA INVOICES**

Invoices for ISA 2010–2011 will be emailed to schools in:

- January 2011 (October administration)
- May 2011 (February Administration)

### **11.1 Fees for Participation/Non-participation**

- A flat rate of AUD800.00 is charged to those schools where 20 or fewer students participate.
- A rate of AUD40.00 per student is charged to those schools where more than 20 students participate
- A 5% discount off total participation fees is offered to those schools where more than 500 students participate

The cost applies to any student who completes all or part of the ISA assessment. These fees include:

- The test materials
- The delivery of test materials by courier to your school



- The marking of the test booklets by our professional team of markers
- The analysis of student results
- The generation of reports
- The online delivery of individual student, class and school reports

Schools will also be charged AUD8.00 for the confirmed number of students who do not participate or are absent for all parts of the ISA at each grade level e.g. if a school orders booklets for 35 Grade 5 students and only 30 students complete all or part of the test, the school will be charged 30 x AUD 40.00 plus 5 x AUD 8.00 (the latter to cover the cost of printing, outwards courier and handling of the unused booklets).

## **11.2 Fees for Cancelled Registrations**

Schools that register and do not participate will be charged AUD8.00 per student plus any freight costs unless notice of withdrawal is received prior to:

- August 25 (October administration)
- December 13 (February administration)

## **11.3 Fees for the return of materials to ACER**

ACER will cover all costs associated with the delivery of test materials to schools (other than any additional courier shipments where the school has underestimated participant numbers and requires additional booklets to be sent after the initial shipment has left ACER). The courier costs associated with the return of test materials to ACER is the responsibility of schools.

ACER will initially cover all courier costs associated with the return of test materials to ACER **ONLY** where schools use the consignment note provided; the courier costs associated with the return of test materials to ACER will appear on a school's final invoice.

## **11.4 Fees for Customised Reporting**

A limited range of customised reporting options are available at additional cost (approximately AUD350.00 per report). Please contact [isa@acer.edu.au](mailto:isa@acer.edu.au)

## **11.5 Fees for Optional CDs and Additional Reports**

### **Standard Reports CD**

AUD100.00 (includes delivery costs). Please note that the reports on this CD will be the same as those delivered online.

### **Interactive Reports**

#### **ISA Interactive Diagnostic Report**

The ISA Interactive Report is delivered online and provides a wide variety of easily-interpretable displays at grade, class and individual student level, in an easy-to-use format which frees administrators and teachers from the task of manipulating the data themselves. The report includes analysis of trends over time for schools that have participated in the ISA for at least three years.

#### **ISA Interactive Tracking Report**

The ISA Interactive Tracking Report allows a school to monitor the performance over time of individual students and of different groups of students within a school. Data from all schools participating in the ISA programme have been used to establish reliable benchmarks for student performance. With this report it is possible to monitor, over a number of calendar years, whether student performance has changed in relation these benchmarks.

The Interactive Diagnostic Report and the Interactive Tracking Report are delivered online. The cost of each Interactive Report is AUD1,000.00 or AUD1500.00 if the two reports are purchased

together. A late ordering fee of AUD200.00 applies for orders received after the release of standard reports. A CD copy can also be purchased for AUD100.00 inclusive of delivery costs.

## **12 ISA WEBSITE**

The ISA website provides further information relating to the ISA Assessment: [www.acer.edu.au/isa](http://www.acer.edu.au/isa)

The information provided on this site includes:

- Documents for download e.g.
  - [ISA School Leaders & Administrators Guide](#)
  - [Benchmark interpretations of the ISA data for classroom teachers](#)
  - [Diagnostic interpretation of the ISA data for classroom teachers](#)
  - [Matching the ISA to the PYP and MYP Curricula](#)
  - [Sample Letter to Parents](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- A listing of schools that participated in ISA 2009–2010
- Samples of ISA reports (including the ISA Interactive Reports)

## Appendix 1: Australian privacy legislation attachments

### International Schools' Assessment (ISA) Privacy Provisions

#### *Information for parents of Australian nationals regarding disclosure of sensitive information*

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has been engaged to conduct the International Schools' Assessment (ISA) for your child's school. ACER is an independent Australian research and development organisation.

ACER will provide school and class reports, and will also provide a report for parents showing your child's performance in relation to scales that describe levels of proficiency in mathematical literacy, reading literacy, and writing. Your child's performance in relation to other international school students at the same grade level will also be shown.

Information collected by ACER regarding your child will be used only for the purpose of the ISA program. Any data identifying the student by name will only be provided to the school. ACER's Privacy Policy may be found at the ACER website [www.acer.edu.au](http://www.acer.edu.au) or you may obtain a copy by writing to the Privacy Officer, ACER, Private Bag 55, Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia. ACER and the school give the assurance that there will be no identification of your child to anyone other than the school.

Both the school and ACER are obliged to ensure that informed consent has been given if sensitive information about a student is recorded for ISA. The following information is defined as sensitive:

- information about a medical condition
- information about an intellectual impairment.

If either of these descriptions apply to your child and you not wish your child to be identified in this way please return the attached form to the school to say that you do not consent to this information being collected about your child. This decision does not affect your child's eligibility to participate in the ISA.

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#### *Withholding consent form for parents of Australian nationals*

If your child might be identified for ISA records in either of the following ways:

- information about a medical condition
- information about an intellectual impairment

and you give your consent it is **NOT** necessary for you to return this form to the school.

It is only necessary to return this form if you are withholding consent. Please sign the appropriate section of the form below if you **do not** consent to sensitive information being recorded about your child for the ISA. Return the form to your child's teacher.

**I have been informed about the ISA assessment and DO NOT consent to my son/daughter (*print name*) \_\_\_\_\_ being identified as**

- (i) requiring special accommodation or reporting on the grounds of a medical condition.

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- (ii) requiring special accommodation or reporting on the grounds of an intellectual impairment.

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## International Schools' Assessment (ISA) Privacy Provisions

### *Privacy provisions regarding access to Australian nationals' personal information*

Dear parent

Your child is participating in an assessment program, the International Schools' Assessment, developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

As the parent of an Australian student you are entitled under Australian privacy legislation to access personal information about your child that is held by ACER in relation to this testing program.

Should you wish to find out about how to access your personal information you can do so by visiting the school testing page of the ACER website:

<http://www.acer.edu.au/legals/assessment-services-privacy-policy.html>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Prue Anderson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Prue Anderson  
ISA Project Director  
Australian Council for Educational Research